

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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HEW PASS NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DRUG ABUSE

WHITEHOUSE PASS DR. PETER BOURNE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, TH

SUBJECT: USDA CROP SUBSTITUTION RESEARCH EVALUATION TEAM VISIT
TO THAILAND

SUMMARY

THE RESEARCH EVALUATION TEAM SENT TO PAKISTAN AND THAILAND BY
THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE/USDA TO REVIEW CROP SUB-
STITUTION PROJECTS CULMINATED ITS VISIT BY MEETING ON 28 APRIL
WITH PRIME MINISTER TANIN KRAIVIEN. THE TEAM DEPARTED ON
29 APRIL FOR WASHINGTON. TWENTY RESEARCH PROJECTS IN THAILAND
FUNDED BY ARS AND CARRIED OUT BY THAI SCIENTISTS WERE REVIEWED.
THE TEAM'S DETAILED REPORT WILL BE COMPLETED IN WASHINGTON.
THE TEAM REPORTS THAT: 1) PROGRESS IN GENERAL HAS BEEN
EXCELLENT; 2) SIX TO EIGHT CROPS ARE READY FOR INITIATION
OF EXTENSION TO FARMERS AND THAT EXTENSION HAS BEEN STARTED
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WITH THREE OF THESE; 3) RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT MORE THAN A
DOZEN CROPS SINGLY AND IN CROPPING SYSTEMS CAN MORE THAN
REPLACE INCOME PER FAMILY PER YEAR FROM OPIUM; 4) COFFEE
HAS GOOD POTENTIAL FOR THE HIGHLANDS BUT SEVERAL SERIOUS
DISEASE AND INSECT PROBLEMS ARGUE IN FAVOR OF NOT REPEAT
NOT LETTING EXPANSION OF PLANTING OUTSTRIP AVAILABILITY
OF SELECTED PLANTING STOCK AND BASIC CONTROL TECHNOLOGY;

5) CONCEPT OF SINGLE CROP REPLACEMENT FOR POPPY UNTENABLE;
6) THAI HAVE REQUISITE SCIENTIFIC EXPERTISE FOR RUNNING
THEIR OWN CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM; THEY NEED HELP WITH
FINANCING THE PROGRAM AND IN ACQUISITION OF INITIAL
PLANTING STOCKS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT; 7) THAI WITH
BACKING OF PM ARE MOVING TOWARD AN ORGANIZED RESEARCH
EXTENSION MARKETING SYSTEM THAT SHOULD BE EFFECTIVE.
END OF SUMMARY.

1. THE USDA CROPS SUBSTITUTION RESEARCH EVALUATION TEAM
(QUENTIN JONES, ECONOMIC BOTANIST AND TEAM LEADER,
HOWARD BROOKS, HORTICULTURIST, D.W. FISHLER, AGRONOMIST,
CURTIS R. JACKSON, PATHOLOGIST AND ADMINISTRATION OF RESEARCH
AND EXTENSION PROGRAMS, R.D. JACKSON, ENTOMOLOGIST,
MARLIN JOHNSON, EXTENSION SPECIALIST, AND TOM COX,
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING SPECIALIST, STATE, WHO WAS ATTACHED
TO THE TEAM ON ITS ARRIVAL IN BANGKOK) ARRIVED BANGKOK ON
17 APRIL AND SPENT NEXT TEN DAYS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THAI
PROJECT LEADERS AND FAO, FORD FOUNDATION AND UNPDAC
ASSOCIATES AND IN ON-SITE OBSERVATION OF EXPERIMENTAL
WORK IN THE HIGHLANDS. THE AMBASSADOR HELD SEVERAL
MEETINGS WITH THE TEAM DURING ITS STAY IN THAILAND.
THE TEAM, THE AG. ATT. AND THE AMBASSADOR WERE GUESTS
OF PRIME MINISTER THANIN KRAIVIXIAN AT A LUNCHEON MEETING
ON 28 APRIL.

2. TWENTY RESEARCH PROJECTS DEALING WITH INCOME SUB-
STITUTION FOR OPIUM IN THE HIL TRIBES AREA OF NORTHERN
THAILAND WERE REVIEWED WITH THE THAI TEAMS INVOLVED AND
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OBSERVED AT FIELD LOCATIONS IN THE HIGHLANDS. THE TEAM
ALSO HAD THE OPPORTUNITY OF VISITING THE CHIANG MAI FOOD
COMPLEX FACTORY, LAMPHUN, AND DISCUSSING CROP RAW MATERIALS
SUPPLY AND MARKET OPPORTUNITIES WITH MANAGEMENT STAFF OF
THE FACTORY.

3. PROGRESS TOWARD RESEARCH OBJECTIVES HAS IN GENERAL
BEEN EXCELLENT. SEVERAL OF THE PROJECTS HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY
FOR THREE YEARS, SOME FOR LESS THAN ONE YEAR, BUT ALL
REFLECT INPUT OF SCIENTIFIC COMPETENCE AND DEDICATION TO
THE GOAL OF PROVIDING HILL TRIBE FARMERS WITH VIABLE
ALTERNATIVES TO OPIUM POPPY.

4. AMONG THE PROJECTS WHICH ARE SUFFICIENTLY ADVANCED
TO PERMIT INCREASE OF SELECTED PROPAGATION STOCK AND
INITIATION OF EXTENSION ACTIVITIES ARE: SEED AND BULB
PRODUCTION OF ORNAMENTAL PLANTS, TEA, STRAWBERRY
DAUGHTER PLANTS AND OFF-SEASON FRUIT, PYRETHRUM, COFFEE,
PEACHES, BEES (FOR POLLINATION PRIMARILY BUT ALSO HONEY

PRODUCTION) AND CHRYSANTHEMUM TEA. INCREASE OF PROPAGATING STOCK AND EXTENSION TO FARMERS HAS ALREADY BEEN STARTED WITH PEACHES, STRAWBERRIES AND COFFEE. ALL OF THE CROPS HERE MENTIONED REQUIRE CONTINUED RESEARCH FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING AND FOR TRAINING OF SPECIALISTS TO LEAD EXTENSION AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES.

5. RESEARCH HAS IDENTIFIED MORE THAN A DOZEN CROPS WHICH SINGLY AND/OR IN CROPPING SYSTEMS CAN MORE THAN REPLACE INCOME PER FAMILY PER YEAR FROM OPIUM. DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED IN THE TEAM'S FINISHED REPORT.

6. COFFEE IS READY TO ENTER AN EXTENSION AND MARKETING PROGRAM. THE EXTENSION EFFORT SHOULD BE CLOSELY MONITORED BY AND TIED TO A CONTINUING RESEARCH EFFORT ON DISEASE AND INSECT PROBLEMS, MINOR ELEMENT NUTRITION, SHADING REQUIREMENTS, AND IDENTIFICATION OF COFFEE LEAF RUST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RACES PRESENT IN THE REGION. A TEAM OF THAI COFFEE RESEARCHERS WILL TRAVEL TO COFFEE PRODUCTION AREAS OF LATIN AMERICA TO OBSERVE HOW THESE COUNTRIES HAVE HANDLED PROBLEMS WHICH FACE OR MAY FACE THAILAND.

7. ALL SCIENTISTS WORKING IN THE CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM AND THE TEAM MEMBERS AGREE THAT THE CONCEPT OF A SINGLE CROP REPLACEMENT FOR OPIUM POPPY IS UNTENABLE EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE MANY CROPS WHICH INDIVIDUALLY COULD YIELD AS MUCH OR MORE CASH INCOME TO THE FARMER AS OPIUM DOES. THE CONCEPT IS UNTENABLE BECAUSE OF THE VARIABILITY OF THE HILL TRIBES AREA IN TERMS OF ALTITUDE (TEMPERATURE), SOILS, WATER AVAILABILITY, SOCIAL ATTITUDES, AND ACCESSIBILITY TO MARKETS. EVEN IF THESE VARIABLES DID NOT EXIST, IT FVULD BE UNWISE TO CREATE A CASH CROP MONOCULTURE.

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8. THE TEAM IS CONVINCED THAT THE THAI ARE FULLY
EQUIPPED IN TERMS OF SCIENTIFIC COMPETENCE AND MANGERIAL
SKILLS TO SUCCESSFULLY CARRY OUT THEIR OWN CROP SUB-
STITUTION PROGRAM. THE THAI ARE ALSO CAPABLE OF
RECOGNIZING DEFICIENCIES IN PROGRAM INPUTS AND OF SEEKING
OUTSIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AS NEEDED. THEY DO NEED
HELP IN FINANCING THE PROGRAM AND IN ACQUIRING INITIAL
PLANTING STOCKS AS WELL AS SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT NOT
AVAILABLE IN THAILAND.

9. DR. PHISIT VORAUAI, PRINCIPAL RESEARCH LEADER ON
THE ORNAMENTS PROJECT, HAS BEEN APPOINTED TO THE
POSITION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE CROP REPLACEMENT AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE NARCOTICS CONTROL
BOARD. DR. PHISIT WITH ASSISTANCE OF RECTORS AND DEPART-
MENT HEADS FROM KASETSART UNIVERSITY, CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY,
MAE JO INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY, AND THE
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PUBLIC WELFARE DEPARTMENT, IS ORGANIZING A RESEARCH AND
EXTENSION SYSTEM WHICH SHOULD EFFECTIVELY INSTITUTIONA-
LIZE THIS IMPORTANT SECTOR OF THE OVERALL PROGRAM.

10. IN THE MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, HE FORCE-
FULLY STATED SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE DISCUSSION THAT
THAILAND WOULD SUCCEED WITH ITS ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM.
HE ALSO CAME DOWN HARD ON THE NEED TO FIND CAPABLE AND
HONEST PEOPLE TO GIVE LEADERSHIP IN THE CRITICAL AREA OF
MARKETING CROPS FROM THE HILL TRIBES AREA. JONES
SUGGESTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER THE IDEA OF APPOINTING
A MARKETING BOARD COMPOSED OF PEOPLE IN THE MARKETING
BUSINESS. SUCH A BOARD WOULD ADVISE PRODUCTION SPECIA-

LISTS IN THE HILL TRIBES AREA AND PROVIDE INITIAL CONTACTS BETWEEN SELLER AND BUYER. THE AMBASSADOR SURFACED THE CONCEPT OF A REVOLVING FUND TO BE USED TO BUY SUBSTITUTE CROP PRODUCTS FROM THE FARMER. THE MANAGER FO SUCH A FUND WOULD SELL THE PRODUCE AND RETURN THE PROCEEDS TO THE FUND. THE FARMER WOULD NOT HAVE TO WAIT FOR PAYMENT AND WOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO STAY WITH THE NEW PROGRAM. THE PRIME MINISTER THOUGHT WELL OF BOTH IDEAS.

11. THE PRIME MINISTER REPORTED THAT NEXT WEEK HE WOULD BE LAUNCHING A NATION-WIDE REFORESTATION PROGRAM. WE POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT THE CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM TIES IN VERY WELL WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE FOREST CONSERVATION DRIVE. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO URGED THAT HE HAVE HIS FORESTERS UTILIZE TRIBAL LABOR IN PLANTING AND CARING FOR TREES SO THAT THE TRIBES WOULD HAVE A VESTED INTERST AND WOULD BE LESS INCLINED TO SLASH AND BURN. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THEY WOULD DO THIS.

12. THOUGH BOTH DR. JONES AND THE AMBASSADOR GAVE THE PRIME MINISTER OBVIOUS OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS HIS THINK-ING ABOUT WHICH THAI ORGANIZATIONS COULD MOST EFFECTIVELY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DIRECT THE TRANSITION FROM RESEARCH TO PRODUCTION IN THE FARMER'S FIELD, HE DID NOT RESPOND. PRESUMABLY HE CONSIDERS THIS A THAI MATTER THAT THE THAI HAVE NOT YET RESOLVED.

13. OVERALL THE MEETING WAS PRODUCTIVE AND ENCOURAGING. BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO CONTINUE THE FRUITFUL COOPERATION TOWARD A COMMON GOAL.
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